WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Agreements with USA in the power sector

*121. SHRI RAMNATH KOVIND: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the nature, extent and dimension of major Government agreements with USA signed recently as bilateral arrangements;

(b) whether these bilateral arrangements are likely to effect any public sector undertaking such as BHEL, NTPC, NHPC, etc. or any other domestic organisation;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof;

(d) what steps Government propose to take to maintain their position and contribution to the country's power generation; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to rehabilitate the surplus work force likely to be displaced in the process ?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI N. K. P. SALVE): (a) Four Statements of Intent to cooperate in the fields of energy efficiency, fossil energy, renewable energy and environment enhancing energy technologies and a Memorandum of Udnerstanding for periodic consultations in the power sector between the Government of India and the Government of U.S.A. were signed during the recent visit of the U.S. Energy Secretary. The Statements of Intent provide for their coming into effect after the conclusion of an Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of U.S.A. on Cooperation in Science and Technology.

(b) There is no likelihood of any consequential adverse effect on BHEL, NTPC, NHPC, etc. of these Statements of Intent or the Memorandum of Understanding.

(c) to (e) Questions do not arise.

New blanches of Commercial Banks

*122. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new branches allowed for Commercial Banks during 1993-94;

(b) whether applications were received during this year from foreign banks for opening new branches; and

(c) if so, whether the list of such banks includes any of the banks named by the Joint Parliamentary Committee which inquired into the financial scam of 1991-92?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Under the Branch Expansion Programme 1990—95, Indian commercial banks have been allotted 264 rural, 1285 semi-urban and 985 localities of urban/metropolitan centres for opening their branches. No year-wise allotment have been made and the banks are required to open the branches by 31-3-95. In addition to above, banks are free to open specialised branches like Industrial Finance, Overseas, Small Scale Industries etc. under the libearlised procedure.

(b) and (c) Reserve Bank of India has reported that some foreign banks applied for opening new branches. The name of such banks are: (1) Banque nationale De Paris, (2) Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait, (3) Deutsche Bank, (4) ABN Amro Bank, (5) Credit Lyonnals, (6) Hongkonk Bank, (7) British Bank of Middle East, (8) Bank of America and (9) Societe Generale. Out of these banks, the names of some banks have been mentioned in the report of Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) which enquired into the irregularities in securities and banking transactions.